

OFFICIAL MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
ST. LOUIS PARK, MINNESOTA  
December 5, 2018 – 6:00 p.m.  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynne Carper, Matt Eckholm, Jessica Kraft, Lisa Peilen,  
Carl Robertson, Joe Tatalovich, Alanna Franklin (youth member)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Claudia Johnston-Madison (excused)

STAFF PRESENT: Meg McMonigal, Sean Walther

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Miller, consultant, HKGi

1. Call to Order – Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes: None
3. Public Hearings
  - A. 2040 Comprehensive Plan  
Applicant: City of St. Louis Park  
Case No.: 17-29-CP

Meg McMonigal, Principal Planner, and Jeff Miller, consultant, HKGi presented the staff report.

Commissioner Peilen asked if consideration of C-1 size limitations is a separate issue.

Sean Walther, Planning and Zoning Supervisor, responded that is a zoning issue and is on a separate track from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Peilen and Ms. McMonigal discussed the city's inclusionary housing policy and private development.

Commissioner Carper asked about feedback received from surrounding jurisdictions and the Met Council on the plan.

Ms. McMonigal said staff heard from the City of Plymouth and received a few advisory comments from MN DOT. She said the Met Council's informal review

regarded advisory comments and a few requests for informational detail. None of those items regarded policy or direction forward.

Commissioner Carper and Mr. Walther discussed the new Transit Oriented Development category characteristics and locations.

Commissioner Carper asked about desire for more mid-size family homes mentioned in survey responses and how that relates to increased density being proposed in the city.

Ms. McMonigal spoke about ways the city has worked to identify sites for new single family homes. She said a number have been built throughout the community, but there are not a lot more places to do that. She said while building more single family homes has been a desire for a long time there is not land available that is appropriate for it.

Mr. Walther spoke about the number of changes made to the zoning ordinance to allow more flexibility to expand existing single family homes. He said a number of loans and remodeling technical assistance programs have been established.

Commissioner Carper said he was concerned that opening up development for duplexes may result in a loss of mid-size family homes.

Ms. McMonigal said the comprehensive plan sets up the overall land use policies. There is a lot of time to work through the details as the city incorporates the policies into the city code.

Commissioner Carper spoke about the city being a walking community. He said he is concerned about the north/south connection and the LRT running.

Ms. McMonigal said the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail runs along the LRT line. She discussed a regional trail underpass at Wooddale, a bridge over Beltline, and crossings under Louisiana and several other pedestrian improvements to be made.

Commissioner Carper said he had questions about population forecasts and how the population increase will cause the need for additional revenue. He asked what the per capita expense is in the city budget.

Commissioner Carper asked how the school system is going to be able to absorb that increase.

Commissioner Tatalovich, school board representative, discussed how the school board looks at demographic studies over a decade. He noted that a referendum was passed last year which allows for increased capacity. He said it's always hard to tell if the projection is proportional to the school age population. He said competition by other schools also has to be considered. He said the school board looks at all these factors.

Commissioner Carper spoke about park expenditure per capita.

Chair Robertson noted the high percentage of survey respondents. He asked Mr. Miller to put that in context.

Mr. Miller said St. Louis Park's response rate was remarkable and the second most for projects in his firm. Only the City of Rochester was higher.

The Chair opened the public hearing.

Robb Siever, 6111 Excelsior Blvd., said he wanted to discuss the rezoning of 4052 Alabama. He said all plans and permits are in place for a zero setback for a proposed parking lot at the adjacent commercial site.

The Chair said the comprehensive plan is not rezoning, but is bigger picture. Anything in process currently will not be rezoned for some time.

Mr. Siever said he just wanted to make sure, and he now understood.

Mr. Walther discussed the additional public process needed for rezoning.

Elaine Rider, 2270 Kentucky Lane, said they are concerned about multi-family at Cedar Lake Road and Louisiana Avenue. They are concerned about lack of privacy due to building height and that more multi-family would change the dynamics of the neighborhood. Neighbors of all ages said they didn't know anything about the proposed changes. She said neighbors like ownership in a neighborhood as opposed to rental. She stated there are already many apartment buildings in that area. She spoke about existing traffic problems and safety concerns crossing Cedar Lake Road and Louisiana Avenue. She discussed cut-through traffic in the area related to heavy existing traffic at the intersection.

Chair Robertson acknowledged the receipt of two different emails reflecting Ms. Rider's comments.

Mr. Walther said those two emails came from residents Ann Carlson and Gail Severson. Staff has followed up with them requesting their addresses for the public record.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Carper noted there will be further discussion and public process regarding any future rezoning.

Mr. Walther stated the comprehensive plan sets forth the direction for long range guidance. There are a number of steps required later to implement rezoning. He discussed timing, priorities, and incremental steps.

Commissioner Carper made a motion recommending approval to submit the St. Louis Park 2040 comprehensive plan to the Metropolitan Council for review. Commissioner Eckholm seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a vote of 6-0.

Chair Robertson thanked residents for their comments.

Ms. McMonigal said the City Council will consider the 2040 Comprehensive Plan at its December 17 meeting.

4. Other Business: None

5. Communications

Mr. Walther stated there are two public hearings scheduled for the December 19 planning commission meeting. He said retail and service size requirements will also be discussed at a study session on December 19.

Mr. Walther announced that the annual meeting of boards and commissions will be held on Feb. 25, 2019, at 5:30 p.m.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Sells  
Recording Secretary